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THE

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DAYS IN THE EAST.

A Poem.

52179

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PREFACE.

In the following Cantos is attempted to be pourtrayed the departure from home, voyage to India, and subsequent career, of an officer in the East India Company's army. As far as India is concerned, the scene is laid in one or two, only, of its Western Provinces. The whole has been thrown into a style much resembling personal narrative, such an arrangement having been found convenient, if not indispensable; and was almost entirely composed upon the homeward voyage of the author from that peninsula. Ill health, contracted when actively employed in the jungles of that country, was the cause of his returning. Should this specimen please, he may perhaps be induced to continue and conclude the sub-

ject, in as condensed a manner as possible: should it not, too much has been already written.

Anxious for much indulgence, as sensible of many imperfections, these stanzas are submitted to the ordeal of, I trust, a "gentle public."

J. H. B.

July 2, 1842.

ERRATA.

Canto I.

Stanza XVIII. line 8, erase the semicolon.
XIX. last line, *for* "make," *read* "wake."
Page 19, line 12, *for* "they," *read* "thy."
Stanza XXIII. line 6, *for* "foam," *read* "form."

Canto II.

Stanza III. line 8, *for* "Sprung," *read* "Spring."
XVIII. line 3, *for* "had," *read* "has."
,, line 5, erase the comma after "possessed."
LIII. line 7, *for* "Naught," *read* "Nought," (in some copies).
Page 86, line 2, *for* "in," *read* "is."
line 8, *for* "the tear," *read* "this tear."

DAYS IN THE EAST.

CANTO I.

CANTO I.

I.

THERE is an isle by Nature blest,
There is an isle by Nature deemed
As she is fertile to be free;
Washed by the dark Atlantic wave—
Alike that wave she shares not rest,
But seems the same eternally;
On her all glorious has beamed
Enough of talent worlds to save,
Yet is she still in misery.

II.

Such is the land from whence my lone one sprung,
For he was born there, and he owned her sire,
From childhood had he with deep rapture hung
Upon the thrilling numbers of her lyre;

And if at times the wild notes he had strung
Swept o'er her hills, or wandered by the shore
That he did love in solitude to track,
Deem not in fancied frenzy he did soar,
To wish for other days, recall past ages back.

III.

For he did love his home, and was a boy,
And saw but happiness in all around;
To him all nature was one source of joy,
Glad with full hope, and mirth without rebound;
And if he looked thereon with eager eye,
'Twas to enjoy the pleasure of the scope
That moment granted of his own green shore;
For there no emblem of mortality
Mingled with visions of his future hope,—
The present all was here, he could not wish for more.

IV.

Yet oft he cast his eye upon the wave,
And wondered where that wave could ever end:
It seemed all boundless, as it were the grave,
Where thought might ramble to eternity;

Yet ever did he love his steps to bend
To some remote, some solitary rock,
Alone to view the ocean's mighty shock
In all the glory of its majesty.

V.

Time wore, and he became a youth, 'twas time
That he should wander to another land,
To seek his fortune in a foreign clime,
To make his home upon a distant strand;
And, if at times the tear-drop in the eye,
Betrayed the love of home that would not die,
Deem not his soul all spiritless and weak,
That Nature did in such fond accents speak:
It is an heir-loom of mortality.

VI.

He had associations, kindred,—all
Could make his home a sacred home to him,
And friends, and true ones, not whom sudden whim,
But many an hour of pleasure to recall,
And many a time when they had played the boy,
And many an hour of heedless youthful joy

And mutual sympathy had made his own ;
And now to wander forth,—ay ! all alone,
To all these dear ones sigh a first farewell,
Seemed as the breaking of some mighty magic spell.

VII.

And there was one who was not of his kin,
Whose eye was sunny as that heart was warm,
Whose beaming looks betrayed a mind within,
A mind as pure as manly was that form;
Yet when they parted, 'twas without a tear,
With scarce one sigh that could betoken pain,
Though in each bosom lurked a silent fear
That upon earth they should not meet again,
That their last hour of intercourse was sped,
Save in the hollow caverns of the dead.

VIII.

There's many a clime beneath the fairy sky,
There's many an isle amid the azure sea,
Where all that charms, that fascinates the eye,
In one bright spot concentred seems to be—
Where all the richness of variety

Glows with a ceaseless splendour, and the beam
Of the bright sun creates what fancy dares not dream.

IX.

Mark how luxuriance nods on yonder hill,
Or crowns with pensive grace the rugged steep;
Mark the gay scene all loveliness and still,
Save the slight ripple of the crystal deep,
That wakes a transient murmur, as with sweep
Of rainbow pinions some fair zephyr sprite
O'er the glad prospect wings her wildly wanton flight.

X.

Ay! mark the richness of the vivid green,
Admire the graceful sweep of each tall palm,
Sigh o'er the vast luxuriance of the scene,
The spicy odour and the breath of balm
That steals as if in sympathy; yet calm
As is the prospect, soothing though each breath,
Beware the baleful foe, each is a sigh of death;
Touch not this flower to blend the gorgeous wreath,
Pluck not yon sunny fruit, a snake lies coiled beneath.

XI.

'Twas to such sunny clime beyond the sea,
To distant Ind that he did wend his way,—
That land of richnèss and of poverty,
Where Britain thrones herself in magic sway:
And well may Ind rejoice, the happy day
That cast her sceptre to the Ocean Queen,
For plundering hordes, fierce Anarchy's array
There rules not now, upheld by sabre keen,
Though such for ages past her fearful lot hath been.

XII.

And as the land of home fled from his sight,
And eve appeared with fast increasing gloom,
And waves and clouds rolled wildly, and the night
Came dark and boisterous, and the sullen boom
From some lone bark in danger and distress
Chimed o'er the wild of waters, as the tomb
Of ocean yawned to gulph each anxious soul,
Then came the love of home without control,
And he arose, and did his kindred bless
With all the fervour of devotedness;

And next he mingled with the ocean cry
A heartfelt, farewell melody.

"Where is my home? Upon the wave
I trace no friendly form,
Around the whelming waters rave
Amid the raging storm:
Where is my home? It is not here,
There is no well-known voice to cheer,
There's but the wild bird's scream!
And yet I weep not: can it be
That this is all reality,
Or do I madly dream?

"Ah! wake one instant,—wake, my mind,
Confess the aching smart;
Thy home lies distant, far behind,
And thou and it must part;
But for a time; the morrow bright,
Though gloom and storm rule this dark night,
Will shew the sun's glad ray;
Then never thus impatient grieve
For some few years thy home to leave—
Trust to a future day.

"The future! what is that to me?
What care I for futurity?
A few short summers o'er my head,
And those who watched my earliest years,
And those who love me best,
Beyond the ken of burning tears,
Beyond all human hopes and fears,
Are numbered with the dead!
Rank grass grows o'er each narrow bed,
Dull clay enwraps each breast!
What a poor solace then to weep
O'er them in their eternal sleep!
'Twill not rejoice their rest.

XII.

"So farewell! loved ones, and my home,
Since I am destined far to roam
Across the trackless sea,
And may all blessings that this mind
Can breathe to those it leaves behind,
Your constant fortune be!
There is a tie time cannot sever,
There is a heart time cannot break;

May you be happy now and ever!
I'll live and hope for your dear sake,
To my lone lot resigned.

XIII.

The morn rose gay and gladsome, as the night
Had set in storm and wildness uncontrolled;
The sun glanced happy on the waters bright,
As the long swell in onward furrows rolled;
And once again the rocky cliffs, the bold
Coast of old England gathered into view;
Some checked a sob, some muttered an adieu,
And some did still gaze on, till it sank out of sight.

XIV.

'Twas the last time that many, then all life,
All hope and confidence, did view that shore,
For some have perished in the battle strife,
And one reposes where the sullen roar
Of the wild billow wakens not his rest;
Disease has shadowed with her Cobra crest(1)
The couch of others; thus have passed away
The brave, the gifted, the sedate, the gay,

Gone as the vapours of a summer sky,
Lost in the mazes of eternity:—

XV.

Gone in the spring of youth and years,—
E'en now for many gush the tears,
That time alone may dry.
What most can parents' fond souls sear?
To see their children die,
Cut off all early in their bloom,
Consigned to some lone heartless tomb,
In some far distant land.—
Of what avail the groan, the tear,
They could not by his pillow stand,
They could not soothe the pulse's beat,
Or quench the fiery fever heat;
They could not hear him, faltering call
A blessing on themselves, and all
That he was born to bless;
They could not note the faint address
He mutters to his God above
In fervency of hope and love;
They could not list the last full sigh
That dissipates mortality.

"It is my own, my darling child,"
A mother cries in anguish wild,
And sinks down senseless there.
"It is indeed my faithful boy!
Thou wert thy aged father's joy,
Most cherished hope, my fondest pride,"
An old man sobs out by her side
In bitterest despair.
The bright stars coldly shine—
Their own—their own created—how?
Go gaze upon that marble brow,
And dare to call it "mine."

XVI.

A month had fled; the gallant ship glides on,
And all the glory of the god of day,
That nature gladdeneth to gaze upon,
Here glances untold majesty. Decay
Sets not her mark on thee, undying orb!
Creation lives but by the radiant play,
Restless, incessant, of thy magic ray;
Unknown, unseen, eternal worlds absorb
All but their substance from thy constant roll; (2)

Without thee, Time exists not, and all space
Hangs a vast void of dark forgetfulness:
Not one glad thing, not one immortal soul
To bask in beauty, or in life, to grace
Nature by their existence, or to bless
The power Almighty that rules them and thee,
In all the fulness of unfathomed mystery.

XVII.

A month has fled, but oh! how changed the scene
The youthful wanderer greets upon the deep:
Here is no craggy cliff, no forest green,
Here greets him, nothing save the wild waves' sweep,
And the untiring beauty of the sky,
Now tranquil, cloudless, and serenely mild,
Making *one* dream creation cannot die;
And now, as uncurbed passion strangely wild
In every feature of variety.

XVIII.

Here bask new wonders of the watery way,
Seeking existence 'mid the billows' foam;
Here rolls the dolphin watching for its prey,
And the Mollusca rears its fragile home;

Here glances by on tiny rainbow wing,
A timid, beautiful, unwearied thing;(3)
But not in wantonness, in sportive play
Beams that bright pinion there,—a living grave;—
Some wily foe, pursues in every passing wave.

XIX.

Thou hast thy foes, thou little one; but mark!
What sweeps so swiftly 'neath the waters bright?
Yon dorsal fin proclaims the watchful shark,
With back dark green, and upturned belly white;
Scarce it doth bait on barbed hook invite;—
Man is his victim! and with silent awe
He who has fronted death in battle fight,
And stemmed undaunted oft the howling storm,
E'en he doth shudder from thy crunching maw,
And half reluctant view thy hated form—
Dread tyrant thou! Oh! if the deep could tell
All the young hearts that with soul-piercing yell
Have vainly grasped its bosom, as the foe
Turned on his back to seize them from below,—(4)
Could point, each muscle starting to repel
The short endurance of a living hell,

Each outstretched bloody limb convulsive there,
Quivering in maddened fervour of despair;
Each upturned, bloodshot, and beseeching eye
Rolling its last in tearless agony,—
Renew the shriek successive to the jerk
As the fell monster revels at his work;—
Could it recall by some unholy spell
Each mangled form from its cold coral cell,
Retinge each billow with its purple flow,
'Twould make a fearful scene of unrecorded woe.

XX.

Peace to the victims of the tyrant fish!
Is man more sparing in his wayward will?
How many millions want the power, not wish,
To slay their fellow mortals, and to spill,
For some half fancied, half forgotten ill,
Oceans of human blood,—as if the roll
Of such a sea could soothe—could solace such a soul!

XXI.

Passed is the fervent equatorial line,
And the broad limit of the torrid zone,

Now stranger stars upon the wanderer shine,
And winds more wild, and seas more boisterous grown,
Ere yet a second tedious month has flown,
Tell of another region; and behold!
That Cape unknown to mariners of old,
(Cape of Good Hope, thou now art Britain's own,)
O'er the proud waters rears its rugged head,
Better than monument or gilded scroll,
Lasting memento of the high of soul,—
De Gama's spirit rises from the dead, (5)
And nods a welcome to the passer by,
From each dark rolling wave, each mountain stern and high.

XXII.

Here sails the Albatross on out-stretched wing, (6)
A fitting emblem of the watery wild,
As if a banished one, a loveless thing
Born of the howling tempest,—the lone child
Of the strange region of cold-blooded life;
With it what is existence but a strife
Of fear and hunger? Nature hath not smiled

Upon this outcast tenant of the deep;
Still it pursues its melancholy sweep,—
Still tireless doth it o'er the billow brood,
And track the waters for its simple food.

* * * * *

A sense of pain, of parting, to the mind
Of those who ardent and acutely feel,
Leaves a dread realm of vacancy behind,
That the bowl cannot, or the cold clear steel:
These both may kill, the former's blighting trace;
Joy cannot hide, dull Time does not efface.
Thus deemed our traveller in pensive mood,
As he did whisper there a sorrowing strain:
Mayhap the sight of land had waked that sense of pain.

TO THE ALBATROSS.

Oh! what art thou, wild wanderer o'er the main?
Where dost thou wing thy solitary way?
Art thou a thing of passion and of pain?
Is thy sole home, the lonely ocean's spray?

I've seen thee wheel around the vessel's prow,
Thy wing doth flap not, and thy cheerless eye
Is dull, forbidding as a sunken brow;
Hast thou no feeling with the things that die?

Yes! when the whirlwind o'er the wave doth sweep,
I've seen thee revel rapturous 'mid the spray;
Thy screams are then as demons of the deep,
As demons gloating o'er expected prey.

Or hath thy home, by some convulsive shock
Torn from its basis, toppled to the wave?
And dost thou wander where thy native rock,
Thy mate—they all have found an ocean grave?

And are thy young ones dead in their rude nest,
Made where the sea-weed and the lichen grew?
And dost thou wander thus a thing opprest,
A lonesome thing?—art thou an exile too?

Is thy heart callous grown to others' grief?
Feels it no anguish, save for selfish ill?
Pass on,—thy sorrows have found quick relief,
And thou dost roam a happy creature still.

Thou hast composure gold can never buy;—
Fly on and speed thee in thy wayward flight;—
For thee the sea hath beauty; and the sky
Sheds not in vain her radiant glow of light.

XXIII.

Another month has fled, and yet no shore
Tints with blue outline the horizon's verge:—
Here doth the snowy bird of beauty soar, (7)
Fair as the realm it floats in. O'er the surge
Skims the light petrel, prophet of the storm.
And now the waves grow boisterous, and the foam
Of each thick cloud foretells the coming strife,—
Where none are losers save the things of life.
Death to encounter,—dread to gaze upon,
The living billows roll supremely on;
The winds howl forth a wild funereal strain,
As they had parted ne'er to meet again;
And troubled Nature seems to stand aghast
At its own waste of elements—the blast,
The rush of waters, and the lightning's glare,
To shadow forth the scenes enacting there;—
And then one momentary pause,—a lull,

As if to magnify the smiting flash,—
And now all darkness, as the stricken hull
Quivers despairing;— each successive crash
Tells of the falling of another mast;
And the roused thunder finds an echoing cry,
In man confessing he was born to die,—
And hark!—a human howl,—and all is past!

XXIV.

To those who sail upon the watery way,
There is a pleasure others may not feel,—
'Tis not romantic, fanciful or gay,
It is not one to make the spirits reel,—
It is the holy social thought that binds
Ourselves unto our brethren; and minds
Are never more developed, less conceal,—
Never their sense or selfishness display,
More than when bounding first o'er ocean's spray;
For all are then together, though alone,
And as they gaze upon the waters wide,
Each must a mutual dependance own,
Or seek for comfort o'er the vessel's side,
From that dark realm beneath, that mocks our senseless pride.

XXV.

But there is yet another holier thought
That strikes the rudest with expressive force, —
That speaks to all,—Religion;—the untaught
Instinctive reverence the hidden source
Of this mysterious world;—the man of books
Gazes in wondering ignorance, and looks
E'en as the uninstructed, as the spray
Dashes each visionary thought away.
Here is no theory to contemplate,—
Here is existence rambling uncontrolled
In measureless capacity, and great,
Greater than reason, some vast power untold,
Matchless in Mercy, majesty, and might,
Must have created—still must govern thee.
Reason is some pale star, with borrowed light,
That trembling, traverses the weary sky,—
A phantom of creation, seen at night,
When heaven's own happy beings seem to die,
Or wander farther through eternity
Than its faint ray can gather,—but when bright
The sun of truth shines forth, it sinks in shade,
For truth is uncreated,—man is made:

And what is man?—an atom of the earth;
And whence hath he derived his reason?—whence his
birth?

XXVI.

Ye who have wandered not where climes are bright,
Where the rich glory of a glowing sky
Glances gay beauty in each ray of light;
Where nature buoyant in her revelry,
Breathing with freshness, as the wild flower fair,
Waves her own tendril tresses in the morn
In gentle playful wantonness, and where—
Where man is not, Creation doth adorn
Herself all happy in her loveliness;
Where each glad billow heaves but to caress
The land it loves to wander by;—go there;
There is the spot for sullen ones to roam,
To gather knowledge from the waving bough,
The passing cloud, the ocean's rainbow foam,
The sparkling pebble. Oh! does thought endow
The realms of fancy with such scenes as these?
Can solitary contemplation please—
Arouse the throb of gratitude, as now

The hum of Nature whispering to the ear
Tells of a viewless one presiding here,—
A something vast and wonderful to thank,
And if it spoke not thus, the mind indeed were blank.
Go! watch the ideot's eye
Mark well its vacancy.

XXVII.

Clime of the cocoa and areca grove,
Clime of the forest and the jungle dense,
Clime where untutored nature loves to rove,
Where crime is rampant, and where innocence,
The savage tiger and the gentle dove
Are co-existent; where the rugged steep,
The fertile spreading plain, the desert drear,
The Simoom's shock, monsoon's(8) all welcome sweep,
In varied contrast constant still appear;
Clime of remote antiquity, at last
Another stranger is upon thy bosom cast.

XXVIII.

Bewitching is the bay, the weather clear,
The sea scarce ruffled by a zephyr sigh,

In the blue haze of distance mountains drear
And jagged precipices meet the eye,
And islands beautiful lie scattered here,
Feathered with tropic verdure to the deep,
And oft some ruined convent wall on high,
Or fair tall stately minaret will shed,
(Telling of dynasties that now are dead,)
Their sacred shadows o'er this scenery;
And ever and anon the measured sweep
Of a wild chorus breaks upon the ear,
As some light vessel glances swiftly by;
And then the magic of the sea and sky
In their deep fulness of transparent blue,
And the mild sea-breeze gathering to woo
The land all parching from the sòlar ray,—
Such are the striking scenes that mark this stirring bay.(9)

XXIX.

These are not all; Nature has given form
And beauty wonderful to this fair scene;
But if our poor imagination warm
O'er the wild mountain and the forest green,

How shall we gaze on Elephanta's shore,
Uniting both in happiest array, (10)
Nor own sensation tingle to outpour
Each thought in poesy? Here caverns grey
Tell where the hand of industry hath been;
And sculptured figures smiling in decay
Gaze on the stranger in dull vacancy;
And realms and millions that have passed away
Gather awakened, as if history
No single token of their glory gave,
And memory called them back to guard their mystic cave.

XXX.

Oh! hast thou seen the scowl on Seeva's brow, (11)
And watched the upturned curl of that proud lip,
As he doth grimly o'er the serpent bow
His hand has grasped with sympathetic grip?
The one doth twine him there, the other gaze
At the infernal fascinating blaze
Of the dread cobra's glance; in that fell eye
Read his own essence of malignity,
And chuckle rapturous one foul thing to find,
Daring to gloat on death, like his own hellish mind.

XXXI.

Time had not mouldered with unsparing touch,
Age scarce had worn a furrowed mark on thee,
Barbarian man has been thy foe, ([12]) for much
Has fallen beneath the guns of bigotry;
A hundred generations passed away
Ere foreign fanatics all ruthlessly
Shattered thy pillared glory,—where are they?
Withered, transformed to some dull mass of clay,
The fate of all who breathe mortality:
Thou still existest ruinous,—they are gone.
Destruction gladdens here,—may well smile on,
For may not Seeva hug him o'er his prey,
Those of to-morrow as of yesterday?
The ruined column and the twilight dim
Befit his presence well,—are emblems pleasing him.

XXXII.

Mayhap ere pyramids in Egypt rose,([13])—
Ere Apis owned his votaries by the Nile,—
Ere the rich temple of the Jew (which throws
No shadow now) stood forth a wondrous pile,—

When the Assyrian empire yet was young,
And Greece did not her niche of glory fill,
Rome yet unborn,—when Homer had not sung;
These breathing monuments of pristine skill—
Of early priestcraft, mystery and pride,
Watched the calm ripple of yon murmuring tide,
And from the bosom of their rugged hill
Amazed the wanderer then, as they astonish still.
Deathless memorial of buried fame,—
Some thousand years have fled, yet thou art still the same.

XXXIII.

Pass we the bay, the Konkun, to the Ghaut
Where science smooths each obstacle away,(14)
And here indeed hath Nature strangely wrought
Scenes harsh and startling in her giant play;
And he who gazes when the waking day
Shews each wild precipice, each forest glen
Dread, deep and darkling in sublime array,
Well may his roused imagination then
In every rustle trace some denizen,
Fierce and ferocious issuing from his lair;
But when the tinkle of the bullock bells,

Breaking the silence of the morning air,
Of peace, security, and commerce tells,—
Where roamed of yore the tiger and the bear,
One owns that Britain's rule hath not been wanting there.

XXXIV.

The sago-palm arises stately there,
And the wild plantain waves her fan-like leaf,
And tangled shrubs and creepers blooming fair,
O'er the dark forest scatter rich relief;
And the shrill crowing of the jungle-cock,
The pea-fowl's scream ascending from the wood,
The troops of monkeys clambering the rock
Chattering incessant should a foe intrude
To break the safety of their solitude;
And the wild frolics of the rusa deer
Bounding all happy in existence here,
The timid hare scarce seen in scampering by,
The rolling vapours traversing the sky,
The stirring music of the waterfall,
The giant mountains frowning over all,
Rouse many a feeling words can never tell—
Wake by-gone scenes remembered but too well.

What if the senses for a moment swim,
The heart beat quicker, or the eye-ball dim? —
Through no more faithful medium than our tears,
Gaze we on visions of departed years.

XXXV.

Why does the beauty of the forest hill,
Or the loud murmur of the rapid stream,
The heart of man with imagery fill,
Whisper the mind, as if in some past dream
They had arisen in their sympathy?
Thus speaks, Kundalleh,(15) thy wild scenery!
Aye seen with rapture, quitted with a sigh,
And ever waking thoughts that never wholly die.

SONG.

The green, the green
Of the tropic scene,
Why doth it never flee?
It has o'er the past
The beauty cast

That now it sheds o'er me;
And the gathering spell
That wakes so well
All memory in this breast,
Alike arose
And whispered those
Who have sunk to eternal rest.

He is gone, he is gone,
Whose genius shone, –
As though some fiery shower
From heaven unbound
His brows had crowned—
Ah! crowned but to devour!
But his might of mind
Hath left behind
What the future cannot kill,
'Till the stars shall die
In their mother sky,
To gladden sensation still.

The lyre of woe
That thrilled below

Told not of other's pain,
It gave alone
To grief a tone
Worlds may not wake again;
And though we mourn
A spirit torn
That all save self defied,
Vain to despond,
'Tis now beyond
Our passion as our pride.

Then peaceful be
The futurity
Of him whose magic spell—
Whose songs of fire
All minds inspire
More than the mind can tell:
And if a sigh
Break silently,
Or sorrow gather keen,
Think that his rest
Is ever blest
As are his laurels green.

'Tis thus we may
Slight tribute pay
Unto the great and gone,
Whom Heaven hath graced
Amid the waste
Of those on whom it shone;
For their might of mind
Has left behind
What the future cannot kill,
Like eternal green
Of the tropic scene,
To gladden sensation still.

XXVI.

And now, Karlee! we canter o'er thy plain, (16)
Buoyant in soul and happy in delight,
And gaze with wonder on each sacred fane,
And nature's scarp that fortifies each height;
And next the Indrooanee's waters bright
Are passed, nor must we linger on our way;
The sun is low, and speeds the coming night,
The wind grows cooler, and the dying day
Sinks in a gorgeous flood of glory to decay.

XXXVII.

Blest is thy light, thou ever living sky!
Blest are the beings that inhabit thee,
That roll eternal, that can never die,
Breathe not the curse of this mortality,—
Beauty thy heir-loom; memory I see
Implanted there by that Almighty hand
That can but shadow forth sublimity.
Some of thy gems are strangers; (17) but I stand
And welcome many known in my own father-land.

XXXVIII.

And as I gaze upon some northern star,
To think that others may be gazing too,—
Those others loved ones in an isle afar,
And it the common prospect of our view,—
Then is it doubly thrilling to renew
Vows of the happy past—the prayer of weal,
Dream of affection, as affection grew
E'en as our years augmented, and to feel
Rapture in one short hour whole ages cannot steal.

XXXIX.

And are they gazing on thy beauty now?
Speak, thou bright tenant of a region blest!
Shed not in vain thy radiance on this brow,—
Sink not a useless prodigy to rest,—
Man reads thy glory not; do thou invest
One sparkle of thy essence in this soul;—
But no! 'tis vain; on, onward unconfessed,
Hold the glad course of thy eternal roll,—
My race is swiftly sped,—you gather to no goal.

XL.

And thou, my Huntly! if thou wert but here
To share with me the beauty of the scene,
This happy moment would be doubly dear:
Filled with the memory of what has been,
Would we then gaze on hill-side, forest green?
No! we would glow with rapture o'er the past,
Recall each happier vision all unseen,
Weep to remember those days could not last,
And smile to think on what misfortune cannot blast.

XLI.

But I am on the waters, and unwell—
And where art thou, my Huntly?—in thy grave!
And yet there gathers here a welcome spell,
Thy wakened spirit rises o'er the wave,
And from the tomb a trifling boon doth crave:
I read thy wishes well, and give these lines
Forth to the world in memory of the brave,
The ever loved, though lost, who now reclines
Where the dull torch of death in fitful triumph shines.

DAYS IN THE EAST.

CANTO II.

CANTO II.

I.

HERE is the Deccan! but some twenty year
And all was havoc, bloodshed, war's array; (18)
Now waves not brand where then a thousand spears
Gleamed in the sunshine with their pennons gay;
No more the drum, the fiery chargers' neigh,
Wake false excitement o'er deserted fields;
The land acknowledges Great Britain's sway,
And she, in pride of twofold triumph, wields
The sword of might o'er those her power, her justice shields;—

II.

Shields from herself as from the foreign foe,
Guarding religion with a steady hand, (19)
Thus warding off interminable woe
Religious discord scatters o'er a land;
And though some fanatics would light the brand,
Exalt the standard of the Cross on high,
And seek through blood what knowledge might command;—
She wishes not her children thus to die,
But walks the nobler path of purest charity.

III.

It is not thus, though, in a distant land,—
Ireland, thy millions tell another tale! (20)
The flames of discord by religion fanned,
Burn ever fiercely there; the widow's wail
From the lone cabin mounts upon the gale,
And every fresh blast howls fresh misery,
And crimes, at whose recital men grow pale,
Sprung from a system of iniquity (21)
Maintained in that fair isle of doubtful liberty.

IV.

Here is the Deccan! fertile field of fame,
Rich in the memory of constant fight:
Here dawned the glory of the noble name (22)
That hallows Britain's conquests;—honour bright
Casts at his feet her diadem of light,
And nations dumb upon his accents wait:
If universal homage can requite
Those silent ills our sympathies create,
He is indeed, in his own every feeling, great.

V.

Behold the clime where children of the West,
Victors, are vanquished by antiquity;
As a lost child unto its mother's breast,
Or wanderer returned, they bend their knee,
And where possessing, own supremacy;
For here the rudiments of every art
Shadow each ruin, haunt each sacred tree,
And to the whole a sympathy impart
Waking some better thought e'en in the stranger's heart.

VI.

For here is all that man hath ever made,
And here is all that man hath ever won;
Yon turret tells of injury repaid,
Yon lonely hut of industry undone,—
Yon marble dome that glitters in the sun,
Crumbles of fruitless love the last resource
That he who raised would most desire to shun;—
Yonder his tomb attraction seems to force,
There read his lonesome fate, sad victim to remorse.

VII.

And here lies he who ruled the battle field,
Whose blood-red turban well became his brow;
Born to command, untutored all to yield,
Where is that vigour, where that daring now?
Where is that spirit-semblance to endow
A world with energy alike thine own?
An energy that could to beauty bow,
Confess confusion only when alone,
And gladden all the true who mantled round thy throne.

VIII.

Hah! art thou tenantless, as is the soul
Of him who fancies others cannot weep?
Or doth thy spirit wander past control,
And as the wild wind o'er thy city sweep?
Or art thou buried in eternal sleep,—
Thy living hope futurity no more,
And the past vanished?—save to those who keep
Some pensioned legend of the days of yore,
At which the living smile as thou didst smile before.

IX.

Here music first made man forget his lot, (23)
And all, save Beauty, as she lingered by,
Or in the palace, or the lonely cot,
Adding attraction to sublimity!
E'en as she glances on the starry sky,
Or wakens strains, how many love to hear!
That banish age and soothe despondency,
Rousing the fancies of another year,
Bidding the wretched hope, and be of better cheer.

X.

Nought thrills more deeply than the viewless strain,
Rouses sensation with more varied spell,
Whether in rapture, sorrow, or in pain,
Whether from death-toll or the marriage-bell;
The hermit e'en that mutters in his cell
Will stop to catch the echoes as they fly,
And he who dies to-morrow,—oh! how well
He marks the knell of moments hurrying by,
Not for their rapid flight, but maddening mystery.

XI.

For Time is unexistent as the though
That bears not semblance to reality,
Unseen and comprehensible in nought,
What is the past, and what futurity?
What are the moments, as unfelt they flee,
Save innate units past perception grown—
Save flitting atoms of eternity,
Born ere the tenants of the starry zone
Beamed throughout space, inert, unconscious, and unknown.

XII.

Flowing for ever, silent, tireless still,
What are the wild fruits scattered on thy stream?
Are they of unmixed goodness, or of ill,
And is existence that which it doth seem?
Or does creation, steeped in some fond dream,
Float down thy waters never to return?
And should it ever waken, will the beam
That breaks its slumbers but illume the urn?
Or light some nobler thought that man would proudly learn?

XIII.

Dreams, dreams at best are the best thoughts of man,
His inmost wishes breathe not all his mind,
Born to perceive, but powerless to plan,
Yet free in thought as is the rushing wind;
Taunted by little knowledge, and confined
Unto himself in what gives joy and pain,
Designless as the ether, yet designed
To rise another being once again
In some bright realm of bliss where thought itself were vain.

XIV.

Oh! these are feelings natural and just;
Oh! these are feelings natural and dear;
Rise they not bodied from our fathers' dust?
Breathe they not more than comfort to the ear?
If not, where lies the solace for each tear
Wept o'er the living, wasted o'er the dead?
Does memory soothe us in our sorrow here,
Peopling the passing hour with what has fled?
Or thought make whole the heart that has with anguish bled.

XV.

And oh! if man is fated still to dream,
Disturb his visions not, if joy they tell;
Make not the future worse than it would seem;—
Do not e'en fancied happiness dispel,—
There is sufficient of a real hell
Planted in all, to turn distrust to hate;
And he who wakes suspicion, wakes a spell
May mantle round him a relentless fate,
Not haunted by a hope, dull, void, and desolate.

XVI.

Such is not here the Brahmin's ancient creed,(24)
His is another and a better belief,—
That all should live, that none are doomed to bleed,
And that, unstained by crime, man's course is brief,
To wander 'mid creation; that all grief
Will end forgetful it had e'er begun,
Buried in true oblivion, and relief
Eternal, from mortality be won,
Where rules the Source of all, where réigns the deathless One.

XVII.

Armies have pillaged, tyrants swept this land,(25)
Stern power oppressed it, urged by love of gain;—
Slaughter has issued, reeking, and her hand
Stained both the household and the holy fane;—
Famine has gathered to herself each grain,
That should have gulped abundance from the heart;
Yet does this creed a monument remain,
Surviving conquest and oppression's art,—
Victorious o'er the ills, the glories that depart.

XVIII.

Yet has corruption tainted the fair stream
That might have followed from a source so pure,
For pride or priestcraft had not, it would seem,
Allowed such plain religion to endure;
(Enough possessed, not of the gaudy lure
And power of self dependence mortals prize,)
The present race their future lot secure,
By charms, self-murder, and idolatries,
Bound by unhallowed chain of dull, foul mysteries.

XIX.

And many are their palaces of prayer,
No clime may boast of sacred temples more;
Yet does their worship breathe a solemn air,
Solemn and still, and stirring as of yore;
And venerable is the Sanscrit lore,
Hallowed by ages of the student's toil;
And still do many through its maze explore
Much that decay has gathered as its spoil,
And more than all research can ever all uncoil.

XX.

Yet there is that within the yearning heart,
Yet there is that within the human mind,
That superstition's most alluring art,
Clothed in its brightest radiance, cannot blind;
And they who wish some fantasy to bind
Around their hope, but gild their own despair,
And win delusion oft,—but rarely find
That which may gain entire possession there,
Cumbered by not a doubt, enfeebled by no care—

XXI.

Care for the future.—But we have too long
Wandered in mazes that are not our own:
Better resume the late neglected song,
And breathe it onward in its former tone.
Here is the clime where murder, pride have grown
Great as the land that held them; here has gold
Created rapture louder than the groan
Of dying hosts destruction did enfold,
The dead they numbered not, thy numbers were well told.

XXII.

What fifty years of steady, honest toil
May have collected in a goodly heap,
In one short hour becomes the victor's spoil,
And they who laboured look in vain to reap.
Ten thousand mothers childless all may weep;
But what are blood and industry to those
Whose wild ambition would existence steep
In crime and bloodshed, as if all were foes,
And they alone deemed great who multiplied men's woes.

XXIII.

And oft, fair Ind, it has been thine to prove
The curse of such ambition, and the rod
Of tyrants human suffering could not move,
Murder and rapine marking where they trod.
Well mayst thou own destruction as a god
Of fierce, terrific, and insatiate power,
Mocking at misery with approving nod,
Still unappeased, though constant thousands pour
Their homage at his shrine in every passing hour.

XXIV.

Thy very richness has but proved thy curse,—
Enticed tormentors ever from afar;
Blest by abundance,—nature for thy nurse,
Thy lot seemed cast beneath propitious star.
But now what art thou? E'en as others are;
Chained, until knowledge shall awake thy might;
Then mayst thou own past suffering as a scar
Won from affliction in a dreary fight
Of many thousand years, when knowledge shed not light.

XXV.

E'en as our traveller sped, such thoughts beguiled
The vacant moments of the dying day,
And as around each gift of nature smiled,
He scarce could dream their sinking to decay.
But thus it ever is: the brightest ray
Is but prophetic of the darkest cloud,
And those who gladden most in rich array
Fate may soon force to mantle in the shroud,—
And they oft perish first who are the most endowed.

XXVI.

With youth, with beauty, and the power to please—
With fire of genius, and with glow of zeal,
Such are the symptoms that betray disease
Beyond mortality's frail skill to heal:
They most must suffer who most deeply feel
And cherish woes the ruder cast away;
Years may roll onward, and affliction steel,
But not affection,—to the latest day
It burns the brighter when all other hopes decay.

XXVII.

Ay! brighter, in the nothingness of hope,
When all has perished, than when all was bright;
Seen in the vista of the retroscope,
Than when such beauty Time might sigh to blight;
And this though gloomy is not total night;
For from the clouds of Time will lightning dart
Across such darkness with electric might,
Awaking sense of pleasure with a start.
That best consumes the sloth, the torpor of the heart.

XXVIII.

But he had nothing of this kind to dwell,
As a dull weight upon a weary soul;—
Passion had pleased, but formed no cankering spell,
Deep and undying, and beyond controul;
Young in each hope and thought, when memory stole
Upon his mind, and whispered of the past
Its waking scenes were mingled as a whole,
In undefinable arrangement cast—
The last array of thought was ever still the last.

XXIX.

But if a passion wakened up a power,
It did not wither rapid as it rose;
For deep enthusiasm then would shower
Splendour around it, as the sun-beam throws
Her glory o'er all nature at the close
Of the mild evening of a summer's day:
True, that such love is fertile of its woes,
Yet does it pass in ecstasy away,
Thrilling and rapturous—all unconscious of decay.

XXX.

Its only recompense its own reward,
It sheds a tear not, save for very joy;
Of its own rapture it awakes the chord,
Seeking not hope its ecstasy to buoy;
Feeling its pleasure that can never cloy,
E'en with the fulness of its own conceit,—
A home of happiness nought may destroy,
Where every sorrow finds a fond retreat,
And every throb of woe with sympathy shall meet.

XXXI.

To where the mountains merge into the plain,
He journeyed on 'mid many a stirring scene,
Such as one loves to recognize again.
Though years have perished, and the times between
The first and second meeting may have been
Spent in long toil and labour, still they show
A something of resemblance as when seen
For the first moment, and awake a glow
Of rapture or regret o'er Time's relentless flow.

XXXII.

Now, from a pass between two rocky knolls,
Survey long lines of light upon the plain—
List to the drum as in the distance rolls
Its full-mouthed mutterings: the hills again
Echo the sound as if their might did deign
To mock the noblest efforts of the brave;
For generations hear that sound in vain,
Thrilling to conquest, only to enslave
And mingle warring hosts in a tumultuous grave.

XXXIII.

And this is Poonah![26] late the city where
Princes and chieftains marshalled in their might.
Now has such glory vanished, and the glare
Of arms and majesty displace not right:
Deceit no longer may in fraud delight,
Or rapine dissipate a quenchless brand;
The star of knowledge struggles through the night,
To burst in double radiance o'er the land,
And in a dazzling flood of glory to expand.

XXXIV.

For Britain rules in majesty and might
This gorgeous land, she only can make free,
Free as the sunshine bursting into light,
To wake creation to her revelry;
Pure as the sentiment of modesty,
Mantled in blushes which betray but joy;
Glad as those visions of futurity
Experience only may at length destroy,—
Dear dreams of present hope, whose sweetness cannot cloy.

XXXV.

Such are the prospects of this Eastern clime,
Such are the million waking dreams of those
Whose fathers have been blinded in past time,—
Servants to strangers, to their country foes,
Sunk in the nothingness of blank repose,
Or lured to apathy by empty toys;
But now the thunder-cloud around them throws
Her mantle, pregnant with a lightning voice,
Bidding the past to rest, the future to rejoice.

XXXVI.

Such the mysterious mission which has sent
The sons of Britain to a distant land,—
The dispensation which nor battlement
Nor armèd phalanx ever can withstand;
Not by the mortal breath of ardour fanned,
Or fenced by dictates of erratic zeal;
But, heaven-directed, breaks upon the strand,
A nation's thousand miseries to heal,—
The true intent of all in glory to reveal.

XXXVII.

Where are the forts once frowning o'er this land?
Existing still, but crumbling into dust.
Where is each plundering Pindaree band? (27)
Their spears are headless, and their sabres rust;
The wind now circles round in hollow gust
Each robber-den, and rank weeds flourish there;
Confusion wakens not the maddening lust
For blood and plunder; and the wild man's lair
Contains some tamer guest,—the tiger or the bear.

XXXVIII.

The village now no longer needs a wall
To guard the harvest from the spoiler's arm;
And if a turret beckons to its fall,
It breeds no sign, sensation of alarm;
In confidence the Ryot tills his farm, (28)
And chaunts the song of solace o'er his toil,
Or marks improvement, with an aspect calm,
Wake new resources from a willing soil,
And by judicious art efface the marks of spoil.

XXXIX. (29)

And should you ever mark the heavy brow,
The look of anger, or the serpent eye,—
The thought that burns not daring to avow—
Its rankling visions of iniquity;
Oh! pass not heedless the possessor by,
But learn a lesson from that look of hate
That seems to batten on malignity,
Cursing and cursed as if decreed by fate
Ill should it never bow, good fortune elevate.

XL.

Such mingled look of hatred and of scorn
You may discern upon the Brahmin's face;
Lord of deceit, he will consent to fawn
And flatter with the glibness of his race;
So that his purpose gained, no art too base
To win the object of his heart's desire;
Fraud and deception practised with a grace
To which few sons of Europe can aspire,
Which, though persuading not, one must almost admire.

XLI.

Yet is he more a patriot at heart,
Than those our rule have made content and free;
He feels the foreigner's strict justice smart
More than infliction of his tyranny.
They thank the stranger for security,
Accept protection from a seeming foe,
Throng to his standards, deem it proud to be
Their own subduers, and to strike the blow
That chains their glory, lays their native country low.

XLII.

But they have proved in many fields their faith,
Their patience, valour, constancy and pride; (30)
And met with fortitude a soldier's death,
And cheered their comrades even as they died;
Without a murmur crossed the ocean tide
And Indus stream, forbidden by their creed;
From Egypt unto China, side by side,
With Britain's own have won the warrior's meed,
And scared the envious foe by many a wondrous deed.

XLIII.

Ay! deeds of chivalry, though deeds of blood!
But mark yon ruined village o'er the stream; (31)
Where stands this monument, once thousands stood,
And thence at first break of the morning beam
A weak battalion beheld the gleam
Of thrice ten thousand lances of the foe,
The Sepoy shrank not,—madness though it seem!
But fought untiring till that sun was low,
To win as deathless fame as any time can shew.

XLIV.

And they who mark that obelisk, may read
The name of every one who perished there;
For this memorial of that proud deed
Records what odds the truly brave can dare:
Their valour was not vigour of despair,
But firmness and decision that could see
Their true position, and resolve to share
Whatever fate might destiny decree,
To die a glorious death, or live in victory.

XLV.

And they did conquer, and have left a name
Revered and honoured in the land they fought
Some deeds are blazoned more, more known to fame,
But this is one with much instruction fraught;
Such actions spring from feeling—are not bought,
And from a feeling rulers should not slight:
To set the system acting thus at naught,
Will be to court destruction—put to flight
The hopes of those who most in Britain's rule delight.

XLVI.

Such are our true supporters in the East;
Yet oft we listen to the Brahmin's lie,
Succumbing most to those who love us least,
As if to cherish our own destiny;
Their approbation we can never buy,
They know us inimical to their race,
Scarce deign concealment of their enmity;
So must we vainly labour to efface
The hatred that no act—no justice can displace.

XLVII.

Their creed is all triumphant in this land.
List the wild music on Jejooree's hill; (32)
On its rough, rugged summit take your stand;
Hark to the numbers sonorous and shrill:
How does the tamed imagination thrill
To find a purer faith is all unknown!
How does the zealot languish to instil
That creed, the blessing of another zone,—
To sow the seed of hope, as there it hath been sown.

XLVIII.

Yet have most creeds their fooleries in faith,
Though to its own deceptions each is blind:
Some punish error by upholding death,
Some by eternal anguish of the mind:
To their own sect salvation is confined
By sects unnumbered, but 'tis not so here:
Almost alone the Brahmin does not bind
Salvation to a system—does not rear
Exclusive rights against the lowly and sincere.

XLIX.

Oh! there is much to learn amidst the wide
Expanse of earth, of ocean, and of air,
Much that would humble e'en religious pride,
Did we but contemplate creation there;
And yet her face is beautifully fair.
And can it woo our confidence, and wake
Our thoughts to bid that confidence despair?
Arouse each proud conviction, but to break—
To crush the hope it roused, the joy it gave to take?

L.

But are all Britons dreamers in this land,
As he who wandereth would seem to be?
No!—but a chivalrous and stirring band,
Full of wild venture, and of energy.
Their home, yon tents beneath that mangoe tree,—
There view them dauntless, careless, and elate,
Free in each action, in expression free,
As if existence were a lengthened fête,
And they had but to wish, enjoyment to create.

LI.

This is their holiday, their day of sport;
They meet, the tenants of the wild to slay,
Beneath the frown of yon majestic fort
Their fellows stormed upon some former day;
Each gallant Arab's sympathetic neigh, (33)
Chimes with the ardour that enlivens all,
On to the jungle side, there roams the prey,
That soon a victim to their spears should fall,
Its well-won spoils soon grace their forest festival.

LII.

All mounted, haste along the covert side,
The willing Indians raise tumultuous cries,
Beat the loud tom-tom, (34) range the thicket wide,
And scour the cane-field where the monster lies,—
Half daunted, yet unwillingly he flies,
Then turns, as if the covert to regain :
Foiled by the crowd who view the destined prize,
That wonted shelter is besought in vain,
And as a last resource, he bursts upon the plain.

LIII.

It is a scene of ecstasy, that burst—
A scene of rapture—a soul-stirring sight!
On rush the hunters, emulous which first
May check the current of his headlong flight.
Bold are their wishes as their spears are bright,
And swift their progress as their souls are true,—
Naught save the chase their rapture to excite,
None save themselves their venturous deeds to view,
No gaping crowd to mark what they may dare to do.

LIV.

Swift close the horsemen with a fearful speed;
Their lances glitter in the morning sun;
Ah! vain his strength, his vigour vain indeed,
Unless that yonder range of hills be won:
There in security the chase may run,
For horses cannot follow, but more near
The fate approaches that he may not shun;—
Already poised, behold the threatening spear,
His life's best blood to drink—to close his stern career.

LV.

Onward they bound, as if devoid of care,
(He wins the prize by whom first blood is shed;) (35)
Where is the leap they do not gladly dare?
O'er the cracked earth, across the torrent's bed,
Stretched is each form, strained forward every head;
And well-plied spurs enforce the rider's will.
One lucky thrust—the monster's course is sped,
His last wild charge is turned with practised skill,—
That blood-shot eye is closed, that grisly form is still.

LVI.

But should you relish not this stirring chase,
Oh! come with me along some torrent's bed,
Espy the monarch of the antlered race, (36)
Snuffing the cool breeze with exalted head;
The timid herd unmindful have not fled,
Perceived the danger that is lurking nigh;
Urge swiftly on with ever cautious tread,
And raise the rifle with unflinching eye;
One crack—one bound in air—that stately buck shall die.

LVII.

Or join the hunter's party, as they throng
Back to their tents beneath the mangoe tree;
Share their excitement as they canter on,
In pride of exercise and energy:
Each glowing form bespeaks how well agree
The sports of nature with the manly soul,—
Well is such mirth contrasted with the glee,
That some imbibe from the bewitching bowl,
When every sense rebels 'gainst reason's calm controul.

LVIII.

Yet do they gladden when the sport is done;
The day declining and refreshment spread,
Recount each prize, how well-contested, won,
And grace their table with the wild-boar's head,
Savage and grim, and resolute, though dead;
Defiance seems to linger in that glance:
Then song and anecdote their sparkles shed,
And dark-eyed village girls who featly dance,
And chaunt some winning strain, in merry group advance.

THE DANCING-GIRLS' SONG. (37)

First Voice.

"Oh! give me a lover whose sorrows are light,
And whose smile is as winning as sunset is fair,
With dark flowing locks and with eyes beaming bright,
Ah! bright as the vision that banishes care."

Second Voice.

"Oh! mine be a lover as valiant as wise,
Undaunted in council, in battle-field brave,
Whose arm can enact what his mind may devise,
Who to man is a master,—to woman a slave."

Both Voices.

"The poet's best dream
Is engendered by love,
As his loftiest theme
Is of spirits above;
But what care we for souls
That abide in the sky,
When all heaven unrolls
In the glance of an eye.

"Ah! the joy that unrolls
In that bright tell-tale beam
Shall enrapture our souls
More than poet's best dream;

And the spirits above,
Though their being is bright,
Would descend to our love
Did they know our delight.

"For our joy is no thought,
And our rapture no dream;
True love is unbought,
As the gifts of the stream,
And the treasure we prize
More than jewels or gold
Is one glance from the eyes
Of the valiant and bold.

"And the valiant and bold
Our caresses shall share;
More rapture untold
Is on earth than in air;
Yet the air that we breathe
Shall be hallowed the more
By the garlands we wreathe
For the form we adore."

LIX.

Such are the sports that sometimes win a thought
From toil of business and official care,
With much amusement and instruction fraught,
And prized more highly as occurring rare;
Though some may smile with supercilious air,
Enchantment hovers round a jungle scene;
To rouse the wild beast from its forest lair,
To chase the deer amid the woodland green,
Are manly stirring sports, and such have ever been.

LX.

When years roll by, and win the best away,
Oh! then revisit that remembered spot,
Think upon those who shared the festive day,
Recount each trifle, until then forgot;
Rend, rend asunder the eternal knot
That wakened memory would gladly break;
Compare thy present with thy former lot;
From the deception of thy dreams awake
To kiss the instructive rod that chastens for thy sake.

LXI.

What once enraptured may no longer charm,—
What once enlivened passes as the wind,—
What maddened then may now but phrenzy calm,
Or all our passions in oblivion bind;
Such are the phantasies to which the mind—
To which the majesty of thought must bow,
The contradictions with existence twined,
That gall our reason, dig the furrowed brow,—
"I loved all feeling once, I hate sensation now."

LXII.

Such is his thought to whom the past is known,
Yet hates the present, since that past has died;—
Such is his thought before the viewless throne,
Where sinks the senseless mockery of pride;—
Such is his anguish when past scenes deride,
Rise taunting memory with good intent;
Once might the present have been gratified,
And with the future joyfully been blent;
But sad scenes waken now,—one only can lament.

LXIII.

But these are hours that are expended well,
In winning health and vigour to the mind;
Such merry days full many a care dispel,
Leave a glad track in memory's waste behind,—
Such as we love to gaze on, when the wind
Of rougher passions, sickness or distress,
May rock the shattered vessel; then the kind
Visions of other days beam not the less,
But as fond guardians rise to comfort and to bless.

LXIV.

And they who shared them rise to comfort too,
Though some have perished, some may linger still,
True to the past, to recollection true,
Constant in joy, affectionate in ill—
Such solemn sacred duty to fulfil
Yields a sad pleasure to the mind of worth,
Awakens memory with chastened thrill,
Adding another link to love of earth,
Mayhap creating thoughts that never yet had birth—

LXV.

Adding a link to those conflicting ties
That bid the mind be happy, yet complain,—
Another link to falsify the wise,
And prove their theories, their thoughts are vain;
Another link that would the past retain,
Yet lingers o'er the future, as if thought
Could fool itself by thinking, or could gain
A rapture from futurity, or aught
That from the hallowed past has not illusion caught.

LXVI.

And oh! the past is hallowed in the mind,—
It breathes of home, of scenes of other days;
It speaks of hearts and happiness combined,—
It tells of love that not with time decays,—
It wakes affection in her pristine blaze,
Thrilling the present with a bygone fire:
If aught our thoughts above ourselves can raise,
If aught can bid the spirit to aspire,
Cherish the hallowed past, 'twill rouse such proud desire.

LXVII.

What wakens now this worthlessness of song,
When pain and anguish throb along my brow,
When weak and weary, thousand memories throng,
And do not comfort as they cannot bow?—
A fragile tie may hold existence now;
Yet do I owe a tribute unto those
To whom I owe that being; and the vow
Of love so oft repeated round me throws
A maze of wildering thought, that will not court repose.

LXVIII.

And on he wandered further through the land;
Where duty pointed there arose his tent—
'Mid plains that with fertility expand,
Up mountain paths of arduous ascent;
Betimes he leans him o'er the battlement,
Where pirates once security could boast;(38)
Betimes in forest-wilds his hours were spent,
Betimes his boat careered along the coast,—
Thus were his days by toil and usefulness engrossed.

LXIX.

There is a town where many a mosque is fair,(39)
Where the gilt crescent glitters in the morn,
Where orange groves breathe fragrance to the air,
That rows of cypress, trellised vines adorn,
Where all around wave plains of ripening corn;
Where the areca palm's surpassing grace
Shadows the pine; (40) yet is its glory shorn,
Though many centuries may not efface
The lingering air of pride that hovers round the place.

LXX.

Ruin has swept what art and labour raised,
Alike destroyed the palace and the tomb;
Where arms and panoply of warfare blazed,
Where beauty triumphed in exulting bloom,
And where a monarch's nod bespoke the doom
Of millions;—now behold an empty waste,
The vaulted chamber broken, and each room,
Each pillared hall with fretted ceiling graced,
Circled by clambering weeds, to vilest use debased.

LXXI.

A gorgeous throne within this portal stood,
Whereon there sat a traitor, trebly dyed ([41])
By the foul issue of three brothers' blood,—
One, who by semblance of religion tried
Ambitious hopes, a hellish mind to hide;
Here every glory mantled round his brow,
For, skilled in arts that rouse another's pride—
Commanding most where most he seemed to bow:
He gained his every hope,—where is that glory now?

LXXII.

Where was that glory when he raised yon tomb,
That rises graceful and surpassing fair,
Contrasting gaily with the cypress gloom
And tone of universal ruin there?
Did he rejoice oft when the noontide glare
Made that light fabric seem e'en lighter still? ([42])
Did thought remove anxiety or care,
Or pride of power subdue the nervous thrill,
That roused remorse to prove triumphant o'er the will?

LXXIII.

The wish to wake the silent from her sleep,
To rouse that loved one from her lonely bed,—
The wish to drown reflections that but steep
The mind in visions of the murdered dead,—
The wish that some forgetfulness might shed
Joy and contentment o'er the blighted heart,
For those it never felt, but it has bled
For self, with sorrow that may not depart,
And felt a loss like hers, with treble anguish smart.

LXXIV.

But he has withered, and with him his power
And mighty empire crumbled to a name;
Both lived their time, both flourish'd for their hour—
May long survive in chronicles of fame:
Ambition was his object and his aim,
And blood the price that bought a gorgeous throne;
Yet his remains a passing sigh may claim, (43)
In their rude tenement, where bone by bone,
Exposed they drop to dust, unmarked by e'en one stone.

LXXV.

But, lo! what city greets the wanderer here?—([44])
What fortress rises with dismantled wall?
Enter the gates, and contemplate the drear
Wide range of buildings tottering to their fall;—
How sadly silent, desolate is all!
How more than vain the whispers of regret!
Destruction reigns triumphant, to recall
The humbling memory of Nature's debt,—
The wild bee clusters round yon fair, tall minaret.

LXXVI.

Thence spoke the priest who summoned all to prayer:
Here hummed the thousands on life's toil intent;
The injured citizen sought justice there;
Above, the lance peered o'er the battlement,
The brazen gun its volumed thunder sent,
That the hills echoed to the distant plain;
But now porch, palace, massive tower are rent,
Nor of aught living does a trace remain,
Save when the jackall wakes his piteous midnight strain.

LXXVII.

Again to Rosa,—'tis a beauteous spot,
And many noble Moslem tombs attest
Their tenants deemed it no ignoble lot
In such an earthly paradise to rest;
There had the hand of fellowship been prest,
And love unasked renewed the willing vow;
There with most rapture had their lot been blest,
And glory circled each deserving brow,—
And there their tombs arise—in peace they slumber now.

LXXXVIII.

But there are other things besides the grave,
Beside the cheerless sepulchre and tomb,—
Man was not born to be-the ceaseless slave
Of wasting thought and all-debasing gloom;
Joy is his birthright; and the willing womb
Of time is pregnant with eternal joy;
Eternal grief can scarcely be the doom
Of those eternity cannot destroy,
And hope at least exists, the wish of man to buoy.

LXXIX.

Thou art a grace, Ellora! (45) and a thing
That centuries of being could not make;
Thou art a glory thought on guileless wing,
That young Imagination could not wake.
Thou art a triumph in most arts, and break
Upon the wanderer's gaze, as breaks a thought
Of young delusion, manhood cannot take;
Thou art a wondrous epitaph, and wrought
By those whose ardent minds had deep illusion caught.

LXXX.

Thy range of temples of three different creeds,(46)
Thy columned elephants, and monsters grim,
Thy sculptured records of heroic deeds,
Create a twilight consciousness of dim
And shadowy objects, that obscurely swim
Before the mind, as motes before the eye;
Half rapt in reverence, half merged in whim,
The stranger meditates in passing by,
Yet cannot wake one thought to pierce thy mystery!

LXXXI.

We stand amid the work of other days,
And a gay party stands around us too,
And all its marvels meet our wondering gaze:
Millions have gazed upon the self-same view,—
Succeeding millions there shall wonder too,
When we are nothingness save worthless clay,
Did aspiration not with hope endue,
Man who is *here* the tenant of a day,
But there a thing of space, that cannot know decay.

LXXXII.

And when the party nestled into song,
And sang of love, of minstrelsy and mirth,
Of sport of feeling, and of what belong
To aught that revelry creates on earth,
Joy was at springtide; for no dreary dearth
Of soul or sensibility was there,
But social minds who prized each other's worth,
Woke varied strains that stirred the silent air,
And banished wasting thought, and dissipated care.

One song of love
And sang with feeling,
As from above
Sensation stealing,
Unwilling sport to mar,
Though his mind seemed in pain,
Though his heart slept afar,
Still he waked it again,
And then the echoes of the cavern rang,
And all sat silent as that sad one sang.

THE SONG OF LOVE.

Oh! where is the loved one, oh! where hath she fled?
Hath she gone, hath she sunk to the cold chilly tomb?
Are those bright locks all withered, that beauty all dead?
Can her smile never win double force from the bloom—
From the bloom on the lip, from the blush on the cheek?
Can the greenwood no more o'er such loveliness wave?
And he that adored—oh! can he only seek—
Seek to soothe her repose 'mid the gloom of the grave?

No! no! 'tis not thus; she is happy and fair,
Fond beauty still glows with a rich radiant beam;—
Sheds enchantment around from a brow free of care,
And men wonder how, in some half-waking dream—
In some half-waking dream they had pictured a form
All fair as the future, all bright as the ray—
All bright as the first ray that breaks 'mid the storm—
As rainbow that hallows the rolling wave's spray.

She is thus to the world, but to me she is dead,
She is gone, she has sunk to the cold chilling tomb;
There the hearts that have loved, when both spirits are fled,
May meet and unite 'mid the grave's ghastly gloom—
'Mid the grave's ghastly gloom: there the half-waking scene
Will not differ from that, that the world visions now;
To me it will picture what once hath been seen,
Though beauty no longer illumine that brow.

Cold will the meeting be that once was warm,
Unfeeling the grasp of each shadowy hand;
The eyes glaring wild as each bodiless form
Embraces in vain on Eternity's strand—

On Eternity's strand,—oh! that clear cold embrace!
An embrace of undying regret must it be;
Yet I love in my fancy the meeting to trace,
'Tis the only day-dream that yields rapture to me.

THE SONG OF FEELING.

My hopes are all vanished, their sunset is fled,
Not a star doth appear in the sky;
I outlinger my lot, since my feeling lies dead
And the wreck of that feeling am I.

I survive all that love once delighted to view,
I survive all that life once held dear;
I survive my own wishes, my own ashes strew,
Yet can moisten them not with a tear.

Sorrow weeps herself dry, but my sorrow weeps not,
It seems glad as mortality's mirth:
It laughs all alone on a far distant spot,
But it is not the laughter of earth.

'Tis a laugh that sounds hollow as friendship is true;
'Tis a laugh bleak as love in a dream;
'Tis a laugh that the future shall often renew
On the banks of eternity's stream.

The feeling that prompts me to gladden to-night
Is the ghost of a feeling long fled—
Is a spark of that feeling, that once beamed as bright
As the tear of regret o'er the dead.

LXXXIII.

A sound of famine gathered o'er the land, (47)
And mothers sold their children to buy bread;
Their love had withered, or could not withstand
The glimpse of life o'er desperation spread
By this last sacrifice: strong men were dead,
And thousands all lay panting for the tomb:
If in the multitude a tear was shed,
'Twas of roused manhood raving at his doom,
Or puling age, or love's bewail o'er beauty's bloom.

LXXXIV.

And mothers sold their children to get bread,
Saving the babes, whom nobody would buy, (48)
When food was none; some kissed her infant's head,
And then contentedly laid down to die!
What is that monster with the bloodshot eye,
Who first with furtive glance,—now, growlings deep,
Snatches that babe despite the mother's cry?
It is a dog!—Do not the senses creep?
The mother is alive—yet hath not power to weep!

LXXXV.

Some others, tortured with a little life,
Would fain advance upon the Pariah foe;(49)
But 'tis ridiculous,—unequal strife
To combat Nature in this scene of woe,—
To them the dogs their fangs all reeking show,
Growling deep vengeance on intruders there;
Men starve,—they feast,—they and the carrion crow,
And wolf and jackall breathing bodies share,
And who would save the child, shrink back in mute
despair,—

LXXXVI.

To be themselves food for the village hog (50)
Before the sun arises in the East;
Nor long their bodies shall the parched earth clog,
Before the maw of that unseemly beast—
They who ruled all, are now of all the least.
It were indeed a lesson to the proud,
To watch the gathering at that ghastly feast,
And view man's spirit thus by hunger bowed
Alone, unscathed to walk amid the listless crowd.

LXXXVII.

And mothers sold their children to get bread,
Saving the babes, whom nobody would buy;
Most, while they breathed, their little infants fed
Until the spring of nutriment was dry;
When some grew furious, and would not die!
And in such mood of madness ate their child,—
And then each parent scanned the other's eye,
And their own bloody hands, and grimly smiled,
And laughed their last of life all wandering and wild.

LXXXVIII.

And Charity arose, but shook her head
Upon the number of the dying there;
Though every hour were tens of thousands fed,
Remorseless Famine had not learnt to spare,—
The steam of death still gathered in the air;
As week by week toiled on, nor any rain
Fell to allay the mirage of despair:
The country was but as a burnt-up plain,[51]
And till the clouds should burst, man's labour was in vain.

LXXXIX.

And there were many came to break their fast,[52]
But would not taste a morsel, and so died,
Sooner than violate the law of caste,
Sooner than their religion were belied;
And Christian ministers stood by and sighed,
And called it superstition; but the page
Of history mocks *such* charity, or pride;
For not in monument of any age
Is more devotion proved, by hero, saint, or sage.

XC.

And ye who revel in a happier clime,
Deem not these scenes exaggerated here;
Would they existed but in poet's rhyme,
And not in sad reality! the spear,
The sword, the gun, make havoc every year;
But what are they to this recurring scourge?
Man can controul not Famine's gaunt career,
That rolls resistless on the ocean's surge,
And howls o'er millions too, their sole funereal dirge!

XCI.

Whence springs the wail of unavailing woe?(53)
Whence breaks the sound of sorrow o'er the sea?
Has folly wakened a terrific foe
And cherished fate in its fatuity?
Whither may Mourning in her madness flee
To seek for comfort o'er the tombless dead?
Where finds she solace in her misery?
She weeps, but vain her bitterest tears are shed
O'er Britain's noble sons who have so vainly bled.

XCII.

Peace to the perished!—but whence flows the peace
To her who yet survives her murdered child?
Peace to the perished!—but will that decrease
A parent's tearful thrill of anguish wild?
How can undying love be reconciled
To fate, because the loved are past relief?
Sorrow soothes friends,—love is not thus beguiled,
But finds small solace, sympathy in grief,—
The mind is past controul, its sorrows past belief.

XCIII.

Calm and collected, silent as the tomb,
On what they most may cherish, but alive
To every feeling, e'en in deepest gloom
Of those who walk in gladness, or survive
Through that first burst of passion that did rive
Her first, her last, of happiness and hope:—
Long has she striven,—now in vain may strive
With the dead visions of the mind to cope,—
Fancy affords no joy, illumes no retroscope.

XCIV.

Peace to the perished!—now their fiery strife
Is quenched in blood,—no morrow breaks their rest:
Peace to the perished!—they were once all life,
High hope and chivalry beheld them blest;
Then were they bold and daring, and each breast
Beat high and rapturous, as foemen stood
Or fled their pride and prowess;—now the crest
Of Kabul's range is with their blood imbrued,—
No foemen now may wake their slumbering solitude.

XCV.

True, there the carrion vulture whets his beak,
And savage beasts may revel 'mid the slain;
And man more savage, to whom brutes are meek,
Halloo his hideous rapture; but how vain!
The spoils that they neglect, his chiefest gain,
And what they cherish most, beyond his power,—
His further power to passionate or pain;
Well may he gladden for the passing hour,—
Such joy may prove a bride with an avenging dower.

XCVI.

For Britain has foul murder to redress,
And deep-dyed treachery must reap its own—
Its rich reward of blood and guiltiness,
Such as men's annals have not often shown;
Sorrow does not our mother turn to stone,—
Her grief is all avenging, as her ire;—
Disaster has but as a whirlwind blown
To fan the Phœnix of her pride; and higher
Her form appears to float amid her world of fire.

XCVII.

Creating ills we are forbid to curse
Is of itself an evil; but to yield
Our fair and universal fame, far worse
Than all defeat upon the battle field:
Now is our triumph just; the sword we wield
May be avenging, but a righteous cause
That blade with double energy has steeled,
And he indeed would be a fool to pause
When Nature gives us all to vindicate her laws.

XCVIII.

The firm of heart, the brave unburied lie!
We cannot rouse them now they are no more;
But we can punish the foul treachery
That made them nothingness, and we can pour
Libation to their manes; and the roar
Of our avenging cannon yet shall break
In echoing thunders on the distant shore,
Where sleep those lost ones never to awake!
Time mercy thus to act, for many millions' sake.

XCIX.

Regret cannot revive those honoured dead;
'Tis vainer still to comment on the past;
Let us command futurity, and shed
Consuming vengeance in a thunder blast!
Thus may the dark cloud that has lately cast
Her shadow o'er our Empire of the East,
Transfer its sullenness to foes aghast,
To find our power the greatest when deemed least,
And through misfortune's self in majesty increased.

C.

But there are wives and children of the slain,(54)
Whose sole reliance was upon the dead!
Pour forth your gold, it will not be in vain,
But call down blessings on the donor's head:
Their blood for Britain was profusely shed,
And those are starving who need comfort most!
When Ind thus suffers, let it not be said
She vainly looked for aid from Britain's coast,
To whom she is, indeed, a glory and a boast!

END OF CANTO II.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

NOTE 1.—page 11.

Disease has shadowed with her Cobra crest.

THE hood or crest peculiar to the snake called the Cobra di Capello has been often described, and is probably well known. In temple sculpture in India it is represented as overshadowing many of the most terrific functionaries of the Hindoo Panthæon, and from its form and associations is a perfect symbol of all that is malignant.

NOTE 2.—page 13.

All but their substance from thy constant roll.

In these lines the general apparent motion and influence upon our planet, is, of course, only considered.

NOTE 3.—page 15.

A timid, beautiful, unwearied thing.

The flying fish, which is so constantly compelled to seek that security in the air, which is denied to it by its native element, is here alluded to.

NOTE 4.—page 15.

Turned on his back to seize them from below.

From the peculiar position of the shark's mouth, it is obliged

to make a dive down, and turn upon its back, or nearly so, in order to seize any body that may be on the surface of the water.

NOTE 5. — page 17.

De Gama's spirit rises from the dead.

Vasco de Gama, the first European who discovered the passage round the Cape of Good Hope to India, and the results of whose successful enterprise can be considered as secondary alone to those engendered by Columbus's discovery of America.

NOTE 6. — page 17.

Here sails the Albatross on outstretched wing.

The Albatross is very commonly seen in latitudes about the Cape of Good Hope, wheeling around and astern of vessels, in search of food. Its powers of flight are astonishing, as they have been met with a thousand miles distant from the nearest land; but the formation of their wings is such as enables them to fly with extreme rapidity, and little apparent exertion.

NOTE 7. — page 20.

Here doth the snowy bird of beauty soar.

Upon the voyage to India, about the Isle of France, is often seen a most beautiful sea-bird. It is of a pure snowy white colour, contrasting strongly with the deep but transparent blue of the sky in those regions. It has two or more gracefully diverging long feathers from the tail, and from this circumstance, I have heard, has been named the "Boatswain" by sailors.

NOTE 8. — page 24.

—— monsoon's all welcome sweep.

The relief afforded by the bursting of the monsoon can only be appreciated by those who have experienced its effects. After

some months of excessive sultriness, during which scarcely a cloud is visible, the torrents of rain that fall, not only revives man, but renews the face of Nature. Vegetation recommences with fresh vigour, and proceeds in some cases with wonderful rapidity.

Note 9. — page 25.

Stanza xxviii.

This description is intended to apply to the beautiful scenery of Bombay harbour. When this settlement belonged to Portugal, the Portuguese seem to have provided, with a lavish hand, in raising forts at different points, and in the erection of numerous churches and convents. The ruins of these latter still exist to prove the sincerity of their founders in the cause of their religion. The territory was moreover once a portion of the Mahommedan Empire in India, and enough still remains to justify the allusion contained in the eighth line to their style of religious architecture.

The harbour contains numerous islands, one of which is the celebrated Elephanta; and the view towards the East being bounded by the majestic and singular range of the Western Ghauts, and numerous subordinate ranges of mountains situated in the Konkan, the effect is striking indeed.

Note 10. — page 26.

Uniting both in happiest array.

The island of Elephanta consists principally of two hills, entirely covered with high jungle, (among which the tall graceful Palmyra palms appear to particular advantage,) and is in itself a remarkably picturesque object from the water. Captain Basil Hall in his "Fragments of Voyages and Travels," has given not only a delightful, but a most accurate description of these cave temples.

Note 11. — page 26.

Oh! hast thou seen the scowl on Seeva's brow?

At the interior extremity of the chief cave of Elephanta is a colossal mass of sculpture, representing the heads of three of the chief functionaries in the Hindoo system of mythology. The head of Seeva, the emblem of destruction, is one of these. He is represented as holding in his hand a cobra di capello, upon which he is gazing with upturned lip, and sardonic expression of satisfaction. The snake seems even to reciprocate this feeling. From the chin to Seeva's forehead, the height may be 6 to 8 feet; but the expression of his countenance is most admirably delineated, even on this gigantic scale. His head-dress, and those of his co-agents of the deity, Brahmah and Vishnu, are elaborately and beautifully sculptured. The whole of this mass is in a very good state of preservation. *See* Hamilton's Gazetteer, Basil Hall's Fragments of Voyages and Travels, &c.

Note 12. — page 27.

Barbarian man has been thy foe.

It is reported that the Portuguese, in their indiscriminate zeal for the suppression of what they deemed idolatry, mutilated the figures, destroyed many of the pillars, and otherwise seriously injured the sculpture and appearance of these caves. If Elephanta ever was a place of worship, it has been long abandoned by the natives for such a purpose; but the marks of devastation still remain, and bear witness rather to the envious and jaundiced feelings of those who occasioned them, than to their judgment, charity, or discernment.

The rock in which these caves have been excavated, is a hard porphyritic trap, which would for ages retain any form sculptured therefrom, were such figures protected from destruction by man.

Note 13. — page 27.

Mayhap ere pyramids in Egypt rose.

History does not reveal, nor do I believe can research discover, at what period these caves were excavated. The natives universally ascribe their formation to the Pandoo dynasty. Now, this dynasty was powerful and celebrated previous to, and one of the principals engaged in, the war of the Maha Bharat. This war, according to the best European conjectures, appears to have occurred about 1450 years before the commencement of the Christian era. The Hindoos date this war 3,000 years B.C. These caves are, moreover, essentially Brahminical, and would, therefore, seem to be more ancient than many other similar ones excavated by the Buddhists and Jains, if not more ancient than those religions themselves; as the Brahmin religion seems decidedly more ancient than the Buddhist or Jain. Without, however, attempting to enter into a discussion, for which I am not prepared, and still less to pretend to attempt to point out the date of their origin, I have merely taken advantage of the obscurity surrounding the subject in this stanza. In so doing, I trust, I have not been too presumptuous.

The reader who may wish information on this subject, can find ample conjecture and detail regarding it, and what is connected with it, in the works of Sir William Jones, Mr. Erskine, General Kennedy, Robertson, Hon. M. Elphinstone's History of India, and in the works of many other learned and distinguished authors.

Note 14. — page 28.

Pass we the bay, the Konkan and the Ghaut,
Where science smooths each obstacle away.

Bombay being situated on an island, the usual method of reaching the continent of India is by sailing up the harbour,

and landing in the district called the Konkan. This province varies in breadth from 30 to 40 miles, is bounded on the west by the ocean, and on the east by the Western Ghauts. These ghauts or range of mountains run north and south; in length may be about 900 miles, and vary in height from 2000 to 8600 feet. The term Ghaut is also used to signify a road or passage leading over this range, that is, from the Konkan or low ground between them and the ocean, to the superior table land of India. The word Ghaut is thus used in the first line of this stanza, and at the point there alluded to, the East India Company's government have constructed a road to facilitate intercourse between their provinces. This work has proved of as immense advantage to the inhabitants, as the construction of leading lines of road throughout India would be to the whole of its population.

Note 15. — page 30.

Thus speaks, Kundalleh, thy wild scenery.

Kundalleh is a beautifully situated village at the summit of the ghaut or pass previously alluded to.

Note 16. — page 33.

And now, Karlee, we canter o'er thy plain.

Karlee is a village, and halting-place for travellers, seven miles to the eastward of Kundalleh: it is situated on an extensive plain, surrounded by different ranges of mountains, many of the isolated summits of which have been converted into fortresses impregnable to all but starvation; the naturally perpendicular scarps surrounding these summits being in some instances hundreds of feet in height. In the sides of the mountains are, moreover, numerous cave temples much resembling those already noticed in the island of Elephanta. The Indrovance River is crossed a few miles distant from Karlee upon the road to Poonah.

Note 17. — page 34.

Some of thy gems are strangers.

As Karlee lies in about latitude 19° north, many stars of the southern hemisphere are there visible, that are not so in the British isles.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

Note 18. — page 39.

Here is the Deccan! but some twenty years
And all was havoc, bloodshed.

Properly speaking, all that portion of the Indian peninsula, south of the Vindyan range of mountains, is the Deccan. In this stanza, however, only that portion of it is alluded to, which, until 1818, had been directly in the hands of the Maharatta government, whose capital was Poonah. Until that year the territory was not taken possession of by the East India Company, and it was then the stage whereon were acted, upon a large scale, scenes of anarchy and bloodshed.

Vide Captain Grant Duff's History of the Maharattas, vol. ii. and iii.

Note 19. — page 40.

Guarding religion with a steady hand.

Perhaps I am wrong in stating that the East India Company's government *guard* the religion of its subjects. It very wisely, however, does not interfere with their religious observances, and by preserving as strict a neutrality as possible in this respect, has deservedly won much esteem and affection from the millions subjugated to its controul.

NOTE 20. — page 40.

It is not thus, though in a distant land,
Ireland, thy millions tell another tale!

Ireland is, indeed, a good specimen of the miseries and ill-will that may be engendered by an attempt at proselytism upon a large scale. Nearly three hundred years have elapsed since the experiment was attempted, during which time the population may have increased from 1,000,000 to nearly 9,000,000, and success is as remote as ever.

It would scarcely be advisable to recommence that experiment upon 120,000,000 of people, which has signally failed when attempted upon a population of 1,000,000 only.

NOTE 21. — page 40.

Sprung from a system of iniquity.

The system here alluded to, is that which forces people of all persuasions to contribute to the support of one form of religion only. To such a law neither Hindoos nor Mahommedans would for one hour submit.

A modified form of such a system was attempted in India by its Mahommedan conquerors, when in the zenith of their power, but its failure was as signal as its injustice and impolicy.

NOTE 22. — page 41.

Here dawned the glory of the noble name.

In allusion to the siege and capture of Ahmednuggur, the battles of Assaye and Argoom, and numerous other exploits familiar to the readers of Anglo-Indian History. — Need I name Wellington?

NOTE 23. — page 43.

Here music first made man forget his lot.

The claim of India to the invention of music, seems to be at least as well founded as that of many other nations.

NOTE 24. — page 47.

Such is not here the Brahmin's ancient creed.

The original belief of the Brahmins appears to me to be as described in this stanza, and this opinion has not been given but after much deliberation and research.

NOTE 25. — page 47.

Armies have pillaged, tyrants swept this land.

The system of village government, which appears to be a civil system deducible in some measure from the tenets of the Hindoo religion, has maintained itself inviolate, notwithstanding the constant series of wars and pillage which external ambition and internal mismanagement have created throughout the peninsula of India

NOTE 26. — page 55.

And this is Poonah, late the city where—

Poonah was taken possession of by a force under the late Sir Lionel Smith in 1818. For the details, *vide* 3d vol. of Grant Duff's History of the Maharattas. Poonah was the capital of the Maharatta empire.

NOTE 27. — page 57.

Where is each plundering Pindarree band?

Previous to the administration of the Marquis of Hastings, the greater portion of India was periodically plundered by large and organized bodies of men called Pindarries. That statesman, at the head of an army of about one hundred and twenty thousand regular troops, put an end to this system, by the destruction of those bodies in the years 1816, 17 and 18.

NOTE 28. — page 58.

In confidence the Ryot tills his farm.

The cultivators of the soil are in India called Ryots.

NOTE 29. — page 58.

And should you ever mark the heavy brow.

This, and the following stanza, are intended to depict from the appearance of some of the Maharatta Brahmins, the feelings they may be supposed to entertain towards a government which has necessarily deprived them of the greater portion of their political power and privileges. Perhaps, of all enemies to any government, the most insidious and irreconcileable may be found among the ranks of a disappointed priesthood.

NOTE 30. — page 60.

But they have proved on many fields their faith, &c.

To confirm the allusion in this stanza to the native Sepoy or soldier, when commanded by British officers, it is only necessary to turn to the pages of Anglo-Indian History.

NOTE 31. — page 60.

But mark yon ruined village o'er the stream.

The village here alluded to is Koreigaom. It is situated on the north bank of the River Beema, and at present is in all but a state of complete ruin.

The reason it is here alluded to is, that on the morning of the first of January, 1818; a small detachment of the British Seroor force was surprised here upon their march from Seroor to Poonah, by a Maharatta army, consisting of about thirty thousand cavalry, and some thousand infantry. The British force consisted of but two six-pounder guns, manned by Europeans, about six hundred Sepoys, and a small detachment of irregular

cavalry. The village of Koreigaom became the scene of action, the strongest position of it being occupied by the enemy's Arab infantry. The unequal conflict lasted from sun-rise to sunset, in the course of which one of the guns was captured and re-captured, and several portions of the village taken and re-taken. Though unable throughout this arduous struggle to procure a drop of water, our troops maintained their position: and in commemoration of this singularly noble action and chivalrous audacity, an obelisk has been erected upon the southern bank of the river. On its basis are inscribed the names of the slain, and also of the *wounded* (I think). Cypresses were planted round the monument, which, owing to the dryness of the climate and the nature of the soil, required to be watered to maintain their verdure. Will it be believed that in the rage for economy and retrenchment which pervaded India from 1829 to 1839, the annual expense (about eight pounds sterling) which this involved, was curtailed, and in consequence two only, out of about twenty-four, of these cypresses remained alive. These two remained so only owing to the good feeling, and at the expense of the native officer who had charge of the obelisk, and who had himself shared in the glory of the day. For some years those trees that were not watered remained standing emblems of ingratitude and neglect on the part of our Government. Of late, however, young trees have been planted in their stead, and the Anglo-Indian government have renewed the grant sufficient for their maintenance.

I have often visited the scene of action.

Any one who wishes for a more detailed account, would do well to consult the 3d vol. of Captain Grant Duff's History of the Maharattas.

NOTE 32. — page 62.

List the wild music on Jejooree's hill.

The town of Jejooree is distant about 30 miles in a southerly direction from Poonah. A celebrated temple stands there, to

which thousands of pilgrims repair from all parts of India. This temple is situated upon the top of a bare, rugged, and precipitous hill, the ascent to it is by steps, and on either side of the ascent are numerous fire towers, which, when illuminated at night, are not an uninteresting or unpleasing addition to the surrounding scene. The noise of tom-toms, huge drums, and such like instruments continue here as incessantly by night as by day.

NOTE 33. — page 64.

Each gallant Arab's sympathetic neigh.

The best horses in India are those imported from Arabia, and such are exclusively used by those who can afford to purchase them.

NOTE 34. — page 65.

Beat the loud tom-tom.

The tom-tom is a musical instrument resembling a small drum.

NOTE 35. — page 66.

He wins the prize by whom first blood is shed.

Hog hunting in India is an arduous and exciting sport; the horsemen carry spears, about ten feet long, and have to manage their horses with the left hand only, which, over a rocky and difficult country, much intersected by beds of torrents, is no joke. The honor of the day is awarded to him who first draws blood: the competition for this is excessive; it is technically termed, "taking the first spear."

NOTE 36. — page 67.

Espy the monarch of the antlered race.

Antelope shooting affords excellent sport in parts of India, but requires much caution to be used in its pursuit, on account

of the wariness of these animals. In parts of the country, herds of hundreds may be seen; but herds of from 30 to 50 are more common. Many varieties exist, they are all beautiful in form, as surpassing in activity and grace.

NOTE 37. — page 68.

The dancing girls' song.

Dancing girls are a set of young females, found in all large towns in India. They are devoted to music, dancing, and pleasure, and can be hired to sing at private houses. They occasionally, but not often, accompany hunting parties to the jungles.

NOTE 38. — page 75.

Betimes he leans him o'er the battlement,
Where pirates once security could boast.

These lines are in allusion to travelling along the coast of the Concan or Koukan, which was, up to the year 1812, much infested by pirates, from whose attacks heavily armed European vessels were alone exempt. They erected numerous forts along this coast, in one of which (Rutnagherry) I counted no less than 138 guns in the year 1838.

NOTE 39. — page 76.

There is a town where many a mosque is fair.

This description is intended to apply to the city of Aurungabad, which was founded by Aurungzebe, and was one of the chief capitals of his vast empire. His palace, and a range of building connected with it, form now one shapeless mass of ruins, some portions of which are worth visiting.

NOTE 40. — page 76.

Where the areca palm's surpassing grace
Shadows the pine.

In my opinion the areca or betel-nut palm is much the most graceful of the species. The pine-apple is here alluded to.

NOTE 41. — page 77.

A gorgeous throne within this portal stood,
Whereon there sat a traitor doubly dyed.

Aurungzebe, Emperor of India, succeeded by the imprisonment of his father, execution of two brothers, and banishment of a third, (subsequently murdered,) in seizing and maintaining the supreme power. In his last days he became as suspicious of his own children attempting to dethrone him, as conscious of the treachery and ingratitude he had been guilty of to his father. His history has often been recorded, and may easily be referred to.

NOTE 42. — page 77.

Did he rejoice when oft the noontide glare
Made that light fabric seem e'en lighter still.

In the environs of Arungabad is a beautiful building erected by Aurungzebe, (as generally supposed,) to the memory of a favourite sister. For miles it forms an interesting object in approaching the city from the westward. The main building is domed, and faced inside and out with white marble. Four tall and graceful minarets rise round this structure. The gardens and walks surrounding the building attest the taste of the original design, but have fallen into total decay. The marble fretwork of the screen surrounding the tomb is light, chaste, and elegant, and the whole structure well worthy of observation.

NOTE 43. — page 78.

But his remains a passing sigh may claim.

Aurungzebe died at Ahmednuggur, and was buried at the town of Roza, (close to the celebrated caves of Ellora). His funeral expenses are said to have cost about nine shillings only, which sum was realized by the sale of articles he himself had made.

His tomb, or rather his grave, still exists, unmarked by a single stone, and open to the sun, wind, and rain. Such is stated to have been his own wish.

NOTE 44. — page 79.

But lo! what city greets the wanderer here?

This line is in allusion to the ruined and desolate city of Doulutabad, which is situated about half way between Aurungabad and Roza. From the impregnable citadel in the centre of this mass of ruin, the extent of the ancient town and its fortifications can be most distinctly traced; but all is now involved in the same destruction, overgrown with creepers, rank grass, forest-trees and shrubs, and presenting a sad spectacle of total desolation.

A minaret about 160 feet in height rises amid one quarter of the ruins, and underneath that portion of the gallery which time has not destroyed, the wild bee has fixed its swarm.

NOTE 45. — page 81.

Thou art a grace, Ellora!

The caves of Ellora are justly celebrated. I know not where the best description of them is to be found, and must confess my inability to describe them. A general description of all the places named by me may, however, be found in "Hamilton's East India Gazeteer."

To visit them, the caves of Elephanta, Keneri and Karlee, and to view the scenery of the Western Ghauts would repay the trouble and expense of a journey from England, to those, at least, who can afford time and money for such a trip.

NOTE 46. — page 81.

Thy range of temples of three different creeds.

The three creeds alluded to—the Brahmin, Buddhist and Jain.

They are almost universally supposed to stand in order of antiquity as placed above. Those who may wish to learn more about these systems may consult the authorities before mentioned.

NOTE 47. — page 86.

A sound of famine gathered o'er the land.

Famines sometimes occur in India attended with consequences more miserable than language can describe. For a description of a famine in that country most analogous to the one described here, Captain Basil Hall's "Fragments of Voyages and Travels," can be referred to. Nothing but facts, and those scarcely of the worst description are described in my text; many others of a similar nature might have been added.

NOTE 48. — page 86.

Saving the babes, whom nobody would buy.

Babes being of no immediate use, are difficult of sale, even in the few instances where mothers might by starvation be inclined to sell them. Pretty girls and stout boys, as may easily be conceived, are more generally saleable, though at incredibly low rates. Thousands even of this latter class perish, either through affection to their homes, or the utter impossibility of procuring food by any method whatever.

NOTE 49. — page 87.

——— *The Pariah foe.*

The common village cur dogs in India are called Pariahs.

NOTE 50. — page 88.

To be themselves food for the village hog.

The village hog is universally and justly detested throughout

the East; it will devour flesh, and instances are recorded of its so doing after battles, sieges, and in cases of famine.

NOTE 51.—page 89.

The country was but as a burnt-up plain,
And till the clouds should burst, man's labour was in vain.

Those, and those only, who have resided where agricultural success is entirely dependent upon an adequate supply of moisture during the rainy season, can duly estimate the truth contained in these lines.

NOTE 52. — page 89.

And there were many came to break their fast,
But would not taste a morsel, and so died,
Sooner than violate the law of caste.

Captain Basil Hall, in his "Fragments of Voyages and Travels," describes a famine prevalent upon the west of India, during which many thousand natives took refuge at Bombay, where all that public or private means could afford, was provided for their relief; the famine alluded to (I think) occurred about the year 1826; but I am writing from memory.

Each caste in India cooks for itself, and sheds to cook in, and cooks for each caste were provided as far as circumstances would admit. Among the famishing strangers, however, who arrived, were some who, not recognizing any of their own caste among the cooks, preferred death to life sustained by food which had been prepared by others. A wonderful instance of the power of vanity—the poverty of pride!

NOTE 53.—page 90.

Whence springs the wail of unavailing woe.

The circumstances connected with the annihilation of our Caubul force, upon their attempt to retire to India, must be fresh

in the memory of all. The attempt to enthrall a free, frank, and independent nation—one who had never offended or irritated our "pride of power," has met with punishment more than proportionate to the offence committed. Amidst those fatal passes, many reaped the whirlwind who never sowed the storm; and for their sakes, and in consideration of the security of our Indian possessions, we have a right to execute vengeance upon the treacherous foe.

With the exception of the last stanza, these lines were written early in April, upon the receipt of the intelligence of the Caubul disasters, and so may not be applicable to the present state of affairs in those regions.

NOTE 54. — page 95.

But there are wives and children of the slain.

A subscription for the wives and children of some of those who fell, has been going the round of the newspapers lately, and as their case is one of real destitution, so any subscription to maintain them will be an act of true charity.

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